237.9 TMT during this period. The overall physical shortage in the country at present has been reduced to only about 1.5% of the average monthly consumption of LPG. However, the backlog at the micro-level, including the markets in Andhra Pradesh, may vary from market on account of operational reasons.

With the restoration of production of LPG in RIL's refinery from 1st December 2005, the supply situation is expected to substantively improve and normalize in the coming few weeks.

Commercial use of LPG

3005. SHRI VARINDER SINGH BAJWA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that LPG cylinders are being diverted for commercial use in connivance with LPG agencies and its delivery boys, they put Government to financial loss;

(b) what remedial measures Government have taken to check this malpractices; and

(c) the action taken by Government against the erring agencies during the last three years, year-wise?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) Public Sector Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) have reported instances of diversion of domestic LPG cylinders for commercial purposes by their LPG distributors.

(b) The following measures have been taken to prevent the diversion/ black marketing of domestic LPG cylinders for commercial purposes:-

(i) Under the LPG (Regulation of Supply and Distribution) Order, 2000 promulgated under the Essential Commodities Act, 1955 the diversion/black marketing of domestic LPG cylinders for commercial purposes by the distributors of OMCs is prohibited. The State Governments are empowered to take action against erring distributors under the provisions of this Order.

(ii) State Governments have been alerted from time to time to take steps against the diversion of domestic cylinders for unauthorized usage.

(iii) As per the marketing Discipline Guidelines (MDG) for LPG distributors, in case of establishment of any diversion/black marketing of domestic LPG cylinder for commercial purposes, the following action is taken against the distributor:-

(a) Fine of Rs. 20,000 plus the price of LPG diverted at commercial rates for 1st offence.

(b) Fine of Rs. 50,000 plus the price of LPG diverted at commercial rates for 2nd offence, and

(c) Termination of the distributorship for 3rd offence.

(iv) The officials of OMCs carry out random checks at distributor's godown, delivery point as well as enroute to ensure that no diverson/black marketing takes place. Action against the erring distributor is taken in terms of MDG/Distributorship Agreement.

(c) During the last three years, the number of LPG distributors penalized for diversion of domestic cylinders for commercial purposes under MDG are as under:—

| Year | Number of LPG distributors | Number of diverted cylinders |
|---|---|---|
| 2002-03 | 7 | 2728 |
| 2003-04 | 13 | 835 |
| 2004-05 | 508 | 34,931 |
| April-October 2005 | 271 | 53,687 |

**Oil Reserves in North-Eastern Region**

t3006. SHRI JANESHWAR MISHRA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that huge natural reserves of oil and gas are available in some States of North-Eastern Region;

(b) if so, the details thereof, State-wise;

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.